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## Cal Poly Psychology Class Turns \$100 into \$10,000

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Several local nonprofit organizations have Cal Poly Professor Shawn Burn to thank for windfalls to their chronically tight budgets.

The Cal Poly professor and associate chair of the Psychology and Child Development Department isn't a professional fund-raiser, yet she knows a thing or two about working together to raise money, and she passes that knowledge on to students in her group dynamics class.

Burn, who has been incorporating the community-service aspect into her class for the past five years, estimates that her students' projects have raised more than \$120,000.

During fall quarter 2005, the Psychology and Child Development Department provided about \$100 to help the students get started. The students then raised almost \$10,000 in donations and gifts-in-kind.

During the first part of the quarter, students learn how to function effectively as a group by managing controversy, creating effective communications, developing methods to promote productivity, leading groups and promoting teamwork.

During the final month of class, students are organized into groups that "must democratically choose a nonprofit organization that embodies the values held by all group members," Burn said. "As a whole, my students raise between \$7,000 and \$10,000 in just a month."

The team members – working cooperatively and interdependently – must collect something quantifiable, such as money or goods that the organization needs, and then track their progress. Each group sets goals and decides how they are going to reach them. Fund-raising methods include raffles, car washes and garage sales.

Organizations that have benefited from the class include Hospice of San Luis Obispo, Family Care Network, the Child Development Center, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Woods Humane Society, the Maxine Lewis Memorial Homeless Shelter, and the Teen Academic Parenting Program.

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